

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 471 113

SO 034 446

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TITLE National Seminar on Education for Democratic Citizenship (Belgrade, Serbia, December 12-15, 2001). Education for Democratic Citizenship, 2001-2004.
INSTITUTION Council of Europe, Strasbourg (France).; United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France).
REPORT NO DGIV/EDU/CIT-2002-12
PUB DATE 2002-04-19
NOTE 33p.; Seminar also organized by the Ministry of Education and Sports of Serbia.
AVAILABLE FROM Council of Europe, F67075 Strasbourg, Cedex, France. Tel: 33-3-88-41-20-00; Web site: <http://www.coe.int>. For full text: http://www.coe.int/T/e/Cultural_Co-operation/Education/E.D.C/Documents_and_publications/.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Proceedings (021) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS
DESCRIPTORS *Citizenship Education; *Democracy; *Educational Change; Educational Objectives; Foreign Countries; *Schools; Seminars
IDENTIFIERS Council of Europe (France); *Serbia; UNESCO

ABSTRACT

The main goal of Education for Democratic Citizenship is the building of a modern and democratic society, meaning a high level of political, ethical, social, and cultural conscience within its membership. Within the scope of the initiated reforms of the education system in Serbia, Education for Democratic Citizenship is primarily focused on a formal, institutional framework. It is understood as a key process to realize one of the main goals of the reform modernization and reorganization of the school system as "substantial support to the development of democracy in the country and its integration in Europe." An Education for Democratic Citizenship seminar held in Belgrade in December 2001 had these basic goals: (1) to present the basis of, to discuss and elaborate the National Report about Education Policy for Democracy and Civic Society in Serbia; (2) to discuss the approaches to the introduction of Education for Democratic Citizenship in the Serbian formal education system; and (3) to get acquainted with the European experiences in this area including European and international exchanges (Council of Europe and UNESCO). This report summarizes the various activities of the seminar's participants and provides a daily agenda. Attached is a participant list. (BT)

Strasbourg, 19 March 2002

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP 2001-2004

National Seminar on Education for
Democratic Citizenship, Belgrade, 12 -
15 December 2001, jointly organised
by the Ministry of Education and
Sports of Serbia, UNESCO and the
Council of Europe

SO 034 446

Report by Suzana Vojinovic

DGIV/EDU/CIT (2002) 12

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1. Common goal of Education for Democratic citizenship

The main goal of the Education for Democratic Citizenship is building of a modern and democratic society, meaning high level of political, ethical, social and cultural conscience of its members. They can become both creators and active participants of modern democratically organised society only by their comprehensive education. It considers improving their cognitive, social and ethical dimensions in accordance with the development of democratic society and "in a context of democratic relations and respecting democratic values: through practice and critical reinvestigation of practice".

The conclusion from the above mentioned common goal could be: "Education for democratic citizenship is neither limited within formal, institutional education system (schooling), but it includes influence of the other social institutions and different forms of informal non-institutional upbringing/education (family, NGO, professional sphere...), nor it is only directed towards children and young population, but it considers the attitude that, at the same time, all citizens are also users and participants/creators of the education for democracy."

Within the scope of the initiated reforms of education system in Serbia, Education for democratic citizenship is mainly focused on formal, institutional framework. It is understood as the process of realising one of the main goals of the reform - modernisation and reorganisation of school system as "substantial support to the development of democracy in the country and its integration in Europe".

1.1 The goal of National seminar on Education for Democratic Citizenship

The basic goals of the Seminar were:

- to present the basis of, to discuss and elaborate the National Report about Education Policy for Democracy and Civic Society, Framework of Education System Democratisation Strategy in Serbia (Report of the Task Force for Democratisation of School) and ROR (national consultations on the introduction of EDC in schools and school system democratisation) summary

- to discuss the approaches to the introduction of Education for Democratic Citizenship in formal education system in Serbia
- to get acquainted with the European experiences in this area including both European and international exchanges (Council of Europe and UNESCO).

2. Organisation of the Seminar

The Seminar was organised by the Ministry of Education and Sports of Serbia (MOES), UNESCO and the Council of Europe. There were 160 participants, representatives of different institutions (MOES, Council of Europe, UNESCO, NGOs and different media), who also deal with the issues related to Education for Democratic Citizenship.

3. Seminar

3.1 Opening of the Seminar

Mrs Mirjana Pesic, co-ordinator of the Experts' group on Democratisation, opened the Seminar and welcomed organisers and participants.

In the opening speech the importance of common reform in Serbia was emphasised, with the special review of Education Reform, by the organisers (Tinde Kovac-Cerovic, Deputy Minister for the Development of Education and International Education Co-operation, Myriam Karela UNESCO representative and Angela Garabagiu, Council of Europe representative). Ms. Tinde Kovac-Cerovic, Deputy Minister pointed out important and successful co-operation between governmental and non-governmental education sector in Serbia. The importance of international co-operation was discussed and presented by the representatives of UNESCO and Council of Europe. They also underlined substantial support that was given to all the countries whose goal is development of democracy on every level, as well as the importance of future integration in Europe. Concrete form of support is, certainly, participation of foreign experts in the National Seminar on EDC, due to which we had an opportunity to hear the achievements in this area in the following countries:

- Italy: Bruno Losito, CoE expert, National Institute For Evaluation of Education System

- UK: Graham Morris, Coe Expert, Citizenship development officer, The Citizenship Foundation
- Croatia: Vedrana Spajić-Vrkas, UNESCO expert, University professor, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb
- Romania: Stefan Popenici, CoE Expert, Ministry of Education, Romania
- Izrael: Yoav Peck, Efshar - Development and Training Organisation
- USA: Douglas Phillips, Centre for Civic Education

3.2 Plenary Session

After the introduction, Serbian and foreign experts talked about the achievements in the area of EDC in their own countries. Mr Dusko Radosavljevic, Vice President of Executive Council of Vojvodina, emphasised that Serbian Government made the Draft for Education Reform through MOES. The aims of these reforms are

- establishing a compatible and comparable education system and education for multiethnic and multicultural society in Serbia,
- reorganisation of school system capable for efficient contribution to the economic recovery in the country, and
- modernisation or reorganisation of school system as the essential support to the future integration in Europe.

In order to reach these aims it is necessary to

- decentralise education system (by inducing school autonomy, introducing new forms of participation in school management and leadership, promoting professional responsibility and altering the role of school inspectors)
- provide better quality of education for all
- introduce programmes for EDC and
- ensure co-ordination of education objectives and the needs of the economic system in terms of qualifications to be acquired.

One of the first steps was establishing partnership relations between Serbian Government and NGOs, especially after the Third Forum of NGO in Yugoslavia, with mutually expressed wish for engagement in the Education for Democracy Sector.

According to that MOES created Expert Teams, consisting of representatives of formal (university professors and teachers) and informal sector (NGO). One of the concrete results of that co-operation is the Project on Civic Education.

Representatives of NGOs also presented projects from the area of EDC in our country.

Mr Miljenko Dereta (the Executive Director, Civic Initiative) presented the Youth Programme "Become a citizen". Its aim is to create active citizens capable to animate their local community to participate in civic processes. The selection of the participants in the project was determined by the expressed wish to take part in it and to stay in their community after the secondary education. The programme consists of four main themes: I and the Society, I and the Others, I and Media and I and the Other in Action. Mrs Vida Grahovac (Secretary General of the "Friends of Serbian Children" association) underlined as the primary activity of this organisation - realisation of the rights of child in accordance with the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child. Therefore, "Bukvar decijih prava" (Pupils Textbook on the Rights of the Child) won UNESCO annual reward in 1997 for the best translated United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child into the children language. Mr Dragan Popadic (MOST), Mrs Nada Ignjatovic-Savic (Centre for non-violent communication) and Mrs Vesna Dejanovic (co-ordinator for Information Sector, YU Centre for the Rights of the Child) talked about the Pilot Project for Civic Education, to be more precise, about implementing already existing contents, (created in these organisations) in Curriculum for the school subject "Civic Education". The aim of this subject is "that students establish knowledge, develop skills and abilities and adopt values as premises for the holistic personal development and for competent, responsible and engaged life in a modern civic society with respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, peace, tolerance, gender equality, understanding and friendship among nations, ethnic, minor and religious groups." Assigned number of students for this subject is 32% (in primary schools) and 15% (in secondary schools); number of assigned teachers and trained staff for teaching this subject is 1 249 for primary and 419 for secondary schools. Assigned teachers attended 86 seminars for the mentioned subject. Also there was Teachers' Manual for Civic Education in Secondary schools issued.

We had an opportunity to hear from the foreign experts from Italy, Great Britain, Israel, USA, Romania and Croatia about the situation of EDC in their countries. They talked about the way of creating skills, values and knowledge necessary for authentic

democratic procedure: how to introduce elements of EDC in the contents of compulsory subjects. They also talked about huge differences among schools within the same social surrounding, among regions; how different representatives of local community participate in performing, understanding and evaluating of programmes like these; and how to instil social and moral responsibility and political literacy.

The Second Day of the Seminar was organised as Plenary Session (in the morning) and Workshops.

Mrs Mirjana Pesic, co-ordinator of the Experts' Group on Democratisation emphasised the importance of education reform in Serbia, the tasks in realisation of the reform, things to be achieved and suggestions on a working plan. Ms Pesic mentioned the following as priorities: development of Curriculum for the new subject Civic Education, raising the issue of introduction of EDC in education institutions through separated subjects or implementation of the existing ones, and engagement in the modernisation and reshaping of school system in accordance with democratic values. In order to achieve this it is necessary to: decentralise current education system, meaning inclusion of all stakeholders in planning and adopting education policy; to alter particular legal framework, meaning to change and to annex it and to enable decentralisation with mechanisms for easier responsibility and commitments guarantees; to establish values and procedural standards for reform in all segments and levels of education institutions defining goals and realisation procedures and to continue with already initiated political reforms in the society.

The following speakers on the second day of Plenary Session were representatives of ROR (Consultation on the Reform) Mrs Borislava Maksimovic and Mrs Njeza Mrsa. ROR Project whose creator is Mrs Tinde Kovac-Cerovic, is conceived as the discussion of all relevant participants of education process on the subject - what to change in our school system. Participants of ROR were students, teacher, parents, principals, and members of School Boards, pedagogues and psychologists. The aim of this discussion was to involve and to give the opportunity to the participants of education system to suggest and to express their own opinion about particular areas of education: school democratisation, training and professional development of teachers, evaluation (Quality system) and reform of curriculum.

Participants of ROR actively took part in education reform in Serbia by suggestions and ideas on the mentioned themes.

3.3 Workshops

At the second part of the second day the participants of the Seminar continued to work in the Workshops. Four Workshops were formed that dealt with key issues of National Strategy Framework.

The First Group dealt with democratisation of education system, precisely, with the transformation of uniform, central planning, financed and regulated education system into a decentralised and open system. The discussion was organised within subgroups and the main themes were: defining problems within the structure of education processes and problems in managing. They named as the most emphasised possibilities: establishing a National Council, an entity empowered to initiate and formulate education policy and active engagement of stakeholders and labour market (through National Council) in education system.

The Second Group dealt with the democratisation of a school as an institution, precisely, transformation of education institutions into open schools. The idea of open school means educational, autonomous, diverse school oriented to the child as the complete personality. In order to make this idea true, i.e. to get an open school, it is necessary to perform series of changes, starting from education methods and upbringing, across the position and role of students, teachers, inspector and parents ending with the improvement of school premises.

The Third Group dealt with the Education for Democratic Citizenship /Education for Human Rights, precisely, with the contents and methodology for this matter. The following questions were raised: is it necessary to have one or more than one subject, to apply as compulsory or obligatory and/or any other form of work (integration in other subjects). This group accepted all offered options of realisation of mentioned subject. Education for Democratic Citizenship/ Education for Human Rights should be of developmental character, meaning to be present during whole primary, secondary and higher education and vocational training. It is considered that the school is only an abridging segment in this kind of education, and that it is

actually life-long learning. The priority in Education for Democracy is, for sure, training of the teacher, all of them, not only those assigned for teaching this subject as separate one (due to cross curricular approach). Methods of their training must be in accordance with the teaching method.

The Fourth Group dealt with democratic leadership, management, and decision making at the school and classroom level (inclusion of students, teachers, parents, school authorities and local community). The Group defined the rules and commitments of the participants of the education process as follows:

- a student has the right to choose subjects, teachers, school
- a teacher has the right to create a lecture upon his own will
- employing conditions for the principals are: VII degree of education level, outstanding educational expert / scientist, submits School Development Project...
- School Board must enlist permanent and temporal members (teachers, parents and representative of local community and temporal members)
- need for MOES funding (salaries+working conditions+in-service training).

Workshops were active during all second and third day of the Seminar. Mr Dragan Popadic, a member of the Team of the Experts' Group on Democratisation presented the results of Workshops.

3.4 Workshops outcomes

Our school system is close and centralised and does not give the opportunity for opening and connecting schools with the other institutions. In order to overcome that and to realise the idea of open school, it is necessary to include particular members of local community on all school management levels. The idea of open school as educational, autonomous, diverse school oriented to the child as the complete personality was also submitted. In order to provide the process of democratic decision-making, mechanisms for ensuring developmental responsibilities and participation of all members, the Group defined rights and commitments of the students, teachers, expert bodies, principals, School Boards and MOES. It was also emphasised that the state must define national interest, as the initial idea for

national curriculum leading on to more specific goals and tasks as well as programmes for school development.

4. Closing Plenary Session Report

Mrs Mirjana Pesic, PhD made an opening speech on the fourth day, regarding previous part of the Seminar. After that Mrs Tinde Kovac-Cerovic, Deputy Minister, pointed out wider Framework of Education Reform. At this moment six expert groups (democratisation, decentralisation, in-service training, evaluation, secondary vocational education and training, education for adults) are in the phase of issuing final suggestions which are going to be formed as united strategy of changes to be presented in January 2002 .

- **decentralisation**: clear emphasis on preparation of the system for decentralisation, information manuals production as a guide for all participants, training for all levels of decision making, preparation of informative system about schooling as compensating mechanism for decentralisation and aid in obtaining decision making quality;

- **assessment and evaluation**: establishing independent centre for assessment of school achievements, teaching processes orientation from the curriculum and plan implementation towards learning efficiency to be transferral and generalised, teacher training for modern assessment type;

- **in-service training**: better preparation for the future teachers on the basic study level - enforcing methodical, pedagogical, didactical education, creating centres on regional (municipal) level for in-service teachers training - by using current trainers, training for sensitivity for school needs, supply and demand;

- **secondary vocational education**: co-ordination of secondary vocational schools and professional profiling with the needs of the society, linking between economy and schools, teachers training.

Next step is to help schools in school development projects and determining priorities in project submission. Actual negotiations with the World Bank as the incentives for such practice for small school grants are currently in the final phase.

It is also actual creating a team for curricular reform - abridging towards framework, basic curriculum and incentive for training and sensitivity for local needs in curriculum supplements.

Douglas Phillips (USA) - said that we have passed through this beautiful Seminar for the sake of the children, because they were going to become citizens of democracy. They need to be helped for comprehending principles, learning skills, adopting knowledge for convincing citizens. At the end he reminded us of still important issues to be thought over and over, but he had no doubts about success.

Mr Gaso Knezevic, Minister of Education - thanked all for participation and expressed his sorrow he did not spend more time on the very Seminar.

Graham Morris (UK) underlined that all raised issues on this Seminar were the same as current questions actively worked out in Great Britain. He concluded that the issue of school democratisation is larger than Serbia, larger than Europe - it is almost universal need, a whole world is working on. He evaluated the Seminar as a very successful one.

Angela Garabagiu (Council of Europe) focused on what and how Council of Europe can and will do in order to help MoES in the implementation of the education reform, especially as regards democratisation of the education system, decentralisation, and improvement of quality in education. Council of Europe, however, would expect from the Ministry of Education and Sports of Serbia a Reform Strategy Document, its clarification and continuous communication before it could make proposals for action. Working on developing criteria for the evaluation of achievements and education quality could be one of the concrete suggestions for cooperation based on such a strategy document. The cooperation, in fact, already takes place. The Serbian Government and MOES take part in discussions and seminars in the Council of Europe. Within Stability Pact for South-East Europe Serbia participated in the Stocktaking research project on EDC policies and practices. Council of Europe also helps grass roots initiatives through its Twinning of Sites of Citizenship project. In addition to that, Serbia will have its representatives in the EDC coordinators' meetings (Norway, Germany). At the end Ms Garabagiu pointed out that co-operation has just started and that it will continue, for sure.

Myriam Karela (UNESCO), after insight in the paper of the Expert Group on Democratisation, made the following two concrete proposals which enter in the framework of UNESCO's co-

operation with and assistance to Serbia: (i) the Organization is willing to take part in the evaluation of the newly introduced subjects in the Serbian curriculum, namely the civics and religious education, (ii) as soon as the final Strategy Paper of Reform related to the Democratization of the education system is finalized, UNESCO will assist MOES in translating the strategy into project documents and submit them to donors. At the end, Mrs Karela congratulated all participants and thanked the organisers of the Seminar for the excellent work accomplished.

Furthermore, during the Seminar, the representatives of UNESCO and Council of Europe mentioned the need to be fully informed about the results achieved in the framework of the Education Reform in Serbia. This could certainly facilitate their further support to this country.

4.1 Summary

The very idea of Education for Democratic Citizenship has existed in Serbia for many years. Her realisation has been intensively broadened, what was presented by NGOs through their activities and programmes. Co-operation of good quality was established between formal and informal sector, and it had and will have certain influence on quick realisation of all projects in the area of EDC. The current result of the co-operation is the introduction of Civic Education as a subject in schools. On the Seminar all participants were given the opportunity to express their opinion, to hear the others and to reach common attitude for solving particular problems. The results of active inclusion in projects led by MOES in the area of democratisation and decentralisation of schools and representatives of formal institutions (chiefs, principals of primary and secondary schools, inspectors, students and parents) speak about sincere wish of mentioned groups of people for democratic changes in our country as well as for establishing civil society.

Agenda

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

9:30-11:00 Registration of participants

11:00-11:30 Opening Addresses (Chair: Mirjana Pesic)

11:30-12:00 Presentation of Serbia draft country report within stocktaking research on EDC policies in SEE (Presenter: Dusko Radosavljevic, Chair: Tinde Kovac Cerovic)

12:00-13:00 Presentations of national experiences: selected NGOs and expert group on civic education (Chair: Tinde Kovac Cerovic)

13:00-15:00 Lunch break

15:00-16:30 Presentation of international experiences: EDC/HRE policies and practices in Croatia, Romania, UK, Italy, Israel and USA (Chair: Myriam Karela)

16:30-17:00 Coffee break

17:00-18:00 Debate on national and international experiences (Chair: Ljiljana Levkov)

Thursday, December 13, 2001

9:30-11:00 Presentation and discussion of the national strategy paper on EDC/democratisation of education system (Presenter: Mirjana Pesic, Chair: Ljiljana Levkov)

11:00-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-13:00 Presentation and discussion of the DOR (local level discussions on reform) summaries (Presenter: DOR team, Facilitator: Snjezana Mrse)

13:00-15:00 Lunch break

15:00-15:15 Presentation of the objectives of working groups (Chair: Myriam Karela)

15:15-18:30 Simultaneous meetings of 4 working groups on main issues contained in the draft strategy paper:

- **Democratization of the Education system:** from uniform, centrally planned, financed and regulated formal system towards decentralized, diversified system open to democratic decision making on different levels (Facilitator: Lidija Radulovic)

- **Democratization of school as institution:** transforming educational institutions into "open schools" - disclosure and reconstruction of "the hidden curriculum" of school: creating democratic atmosphere and partnership relations in the school/classroom (Facilitator: Nadezda Ignjatovic Savic)
- **EDC/HRE curriculum and cross-curricular aspects:** content and method of education for democratic citizenship and human rights, EDC/HRE as a formal curriculum and/or cross-curricular integration of both its content and method (Facilitator: Danijela Petrovic)
- **Democratic governance and management:** participation of different stakeholders in school/classroom management and governance: rules, roles and responsibilities: organizational and pedagogic aspects (Facilitator: Marina Ostojic)

16:30-17:00 Coffee break

Friday, December 14, 2001

9:30-13:00 Continuation of meetings of the working groups

(11:00-11:30 Coffee break)

13:00-15:00 Lunch break

15:00-15:30 Preparing groups' reports

15:30-17:30 Presentation of the reports of the working groups - plenary
(Chair: Dragan Popadic)

17:30-18:30 Discussion on the reports - plenary (Chair: Dragan Popadic)

Evening: Planning meeting MoE, Coe, UNESCO, Expert Group and International Experts on national and international follow-up proposals)

Saturday, December 15, 2001

9:30-11:00 Discussion on follow up actions based on the working groups reports concerning: the strategy paper, concrete future steps, responsibilities, timetable (Chair: Myriam Karela)

11:00-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-13:00 Discussion on national and international follow-up proposals (Chair: Myriam Karela)

13:00-13:30 Closing the Seminar

Common issues, to be considered in all working groups:

Civil society/NGO/private sector partnership

Participation of all stakeholders (teachers, students, parents....)

Specific issues concerning the level of education/types of school

Needed training and empowerment of participants

Legislation

*Structure of group work: listing of issues and problems,
suggested solutions, recommended strategies*

List of participants

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